

1 25. A system in accordance with Claim 24, further comprising a vacuum
2 source in fluid communication with said of said tissue acquisition device inner
3 cannula main lumen.

1 26. A system in accordance with Claim 25, further comprising a tissue
2 collector fluidly between said vacuum source and said tissue acquisition device inner
3 cannula main lumen.

1 27. A method of sampling tissue from a patient, comprising the steps:
2 inserting a cannula into tissue of a patient, said cannula including a
3 pair of concentric cannulae each having a cutout therein, said cannula including a RF
4 energy cutting loop disposed within said cannula;
5 cutting said tissue along a plane by moving said RF energy cutting
6 loop from a position inside said cannula to a position outside said cannula while
7 applying RF energy to said RF energy cutting loop;
8 cutting said tissue by moving said RF energy cutting loop along a first
9 path extending partially along the length of said cannula while applying RF energy to
10 said RF energy cutting loop; and
11 cutting said tissue along a plane perpendicular to said path by moving
12 said RF energy cutting loop.

1 28. A method of sampling tissue from a patient in accordance with Claim
2 27, wherein one of said steps of cutting said tissue along a plane comprises moving
3 said RF energy cutting loop from said outside position to said inside position while
4 applying RF energy to said RF energy cutting loop.

1 29. A method of sampling tissue from a patient in accordance with Claim
2 27, wherein one of said steps of cutting said tissue along a plane comprises moving
3 said RF energy cutting loop and said cannula about a longitudinal center axis of said
4 cannula.

1 30. A method of sampling tissue from a patient in accordance with Claim
2 29, further comprising cutting said tissue by moving said RF energy cutting loop
3 along a second path extending parallel to said first path and in a direction opposite to
4 said cutting step along said first path by moving said RF energy cutting loop along a
5 said second path partially along the length of said cannula while applying RF energy
6 to said RF energy cutting loop.

1 31. A method of sampling tissue from a patient in accordance with Claim
2 27, further comprising:
3 rotating one of said concentric cannulae to substantially align said
4 cutouts; and

5 said step of cutting said tissue along a plane by moving said RF energy
6 cutting loop from a position inside said cannula to a position outside said cannula
7 comprises the step of rotating said cutting loop out of said cannula.

1 32. A method of sampling tissue from a patient in accordance with Claim
2 27, further comprising:

3 aspirating a tissue sample proximally through a lumen of an inner
4 cannula of said concentric cannulae.

1 33. A method of sampling tissue from a patient in accordance with Claim
2 27, wherein both of said steps of cutting said tissue along a plane comprises moving
3 said RF energy cutting loop between said outside position and said inside position
4 while applying RF energy to said RF energy cutting loop.

1 34. A tissue acquisition device useful in retrieving tissue samples from a
2 patient, comprising:
3 a generally cylindrical cannula having a longitudinal axis and a cutout;
4 an electrically energized cutting wire loop arranged generally in a
5 plane substantially parallel to said cannula longitudinal axis, said loop being rotatable
6 about a loop axis which extends generally parallel to said cannula longitudinal axis,
7 said loop axis being offset from said cannula longitudinal axis;